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not always belonging to such literature, of being in the highest degree readable. The eminent author looked forward, we believe, with great interest to the publication of these volumes, and it is deeply to be regretted that he has not been spared to witness their cordial reception by his countrymen. The books are handsomely bound and copiously illustrated.

II.

ECCLESIASTICAL ECONOMY AND CHURCH LIFE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the wonderful vitality and the triumphant progress of the Christian church, its best friends do not yet claim that its organization is perfect. Viewed as a corporate body, consisting often of several hundred members, each claiming a voice in her deliberations, it is not a matter of surprise that knotty problems sometimes arise.

The ethics of church relations in all possible circumstances has never received fuller or more able treatment than in the handsome volume,* edited and in part written by the Rev. Washington Gladden. The inception of the work is due to Mrs. Margaret Woods Lawrence, known as "Meta Lander," but her collected material was purchased by the publishers, and by Mr. Gladden combined with his own work and that of other men well versed in matters of social and ecclesiastical polity. Prominent among these may be named the Rev. Drs. Lyman Abbott, Josiah Strong, J. H. Vincent, T. T. Munger, H. M. Scudder, J. K. Nutting, A. F. Schauffler, with Mr. Austin Abbott, Mr. E. C. Gardner, and Profs. Llewellyn and Waldo Pratt.

The series of brief, crisp, suggestive essays, seventy-seven in number, is conveniently arranged under the general divisions of the Pastor's Call, Parish Business, Parish Building, The Pastor at Home and at Work, Helping the Pastor, The People at Work, The Sunday-School and Worship. No more than brief mention of the most thoughtful is here possible.

Under The Pastor's Call, Mr. Gladden criticises the sentiment which would prevent a weary and overworked pastor from seeking to change his field so long as his services are acceptable. "If they [the churches] could create a sentiment which would prevent a settled minister from receiving a call, the ministers would be left in an embarrassing position. The attempt to create such a sentiment is an attempt to form a kind of ecclesiastical trades-union, under which ministers shall be wholly at the mercy of the churches." The practice of "stealing a pastor," as it is called, could be avoided by the establishment of ministerial bureaux, conducted with so much dignity and delicacy that no clergyman need hesitate to enter his name as an applicant. The still more difficult matter of getting rid of an undesirable pastor is happily treated by Mrs. Lawrence.

So many churches suffer partial or entire shipwreck on account of financial embarrassment that the practical opinions of an eminent lawyer as to the best means of conducting parish business are well inserted in a work of this character. Mr. Austin Abbott offers several short chapters of wise suggestions, in which he carefully explains the principles underlying church organization, spiritual and secular, and gives rules for the successful administration of church affairs, for contracts, funds, and special trusts and financial accounts. And Mr. E. C. Gardner, whose numerous and popular works on building entitle his opinions to consideration, agreeably discusses the church edifice, favoring the use of the most durable material and the choicest architectural designs, and insists that the interior shall

* "Parish Problems : Hints and Helps for the People of the Churches." Edited by Washington Gladden.—The Century Company.

be light and cheerful. "Our perceptions, physical, mental, and moral, are most easily led astray in the drowsiness that is sometimes honestly mistaken for devoutness and is apt to be induced by darkness. To avoid this danger the auditorium should be light." Lovers of ecclesiastical splendor will not agree with the conclusion that it is "inexcusably stupid to shut out from country and village churches the beauty of trees, and skies, and distant hill-tops by horrible caricatures of adoring but distracted-looking saints, depicted in colored glass and lead." Or "to profane Scripture texts by employing them for doubtfully decorative purposes in such fantastic typography that they might as well be Egyptian hieroglyphics or unmeaning arabesques." A few trenchant and eminently sensible words are added about the practice of closing the church building, with all its beauty of adornment and capacity for use, for six days out of seven.

To the popular delusion concerning the total depravity of parsonage children, Mrs. Lawrence opposes certain statements gathered from carefully prepared statistics, by which it appears that of two thousand five hundred and thirty-five children of ministers and deacons, whose careers have been traced to years of maturity, only two and one-half per cent. have disgraced the family name and the sacred office.

From his own abundant experience, Mr. Gladden writes of *The Helpfulness of Hearing*, emphasizing some familiar truths, but especially urging remembrance of the fact that a large audience not only inspires the pastor to put forth his best efforts, but induces greater intellectual and spiritual impressibility in the hearers.

The most important chapters should, obviously, relate to the people at work. Here, as elsewhere, Mr. Gladden's vigorous thoughts claim attention. He allows no idlers in his corner of the vineyard. Do something, he entreats. "It is better to be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord than to be a dead-head." Dr. Abbott has an excellent paper in this division on *Mission Work in the Home Field*, which he finds suffering because of the lack of willingness to undertake home work that is ready to hand, and he urges the giving of one's self. "The church member drops a nickel on the missionary plate, and repeats, with a difference, Isaiah's proffer, "Here, Lord, am I ; send him." More aggressive efforts are required. We must go out to the highways. They will not come to us.

Perhaps no chapters in the entire book will accomplish better results, if thoughtfully considered, than two by the Rev. Dr. Josiah Strong on *The Latent Power in the Churches*. Endeavoring to keep before the reader the true object of the church institution, Dr. Strong pithily says : "The church is not an ark, in which the elect few may take refuge and float placidly along over the perishing members of a lost race. It is not a ferry-boat intended to transfer idle passengers to the heavenly shore." The latent power in numbers in financial matters, and in work, is conclusively shown, with ample and effective examples of its operation. Under the latter topic, emphasis is laid on the fact, that whatever the Christian's occupation, his BUSINESS is to save souls."

Some of the best Sunday-school writers in the country, notably Rev. Drs. Vincent and Shauffler, discuss the purposes and best conditions for success in that department of church work. The final section, on *Worship*, concludes with a thoughtful paper by the Rev. R. G. Greene.

III.

RABELAIS.

YESTERDAY, a purified Rabelais would have been deemed an impossibility. To-day, a most noteworthy achievement is precisely such a version, which has been